

City of Takoma Park, Maryland

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Press Release

Survey Shows Takoma Park Residents Enjoy City Life

TAKOMA PARK, Md., January 11, 2008 – Takoma Park Releases Resident Survey.

Takoma Park residents enjoy the sense of community and excellent quality of life in the City, according to a recently released survey. Overall, City services were rated favorably, and residents feel the City excels at welcoming resident involvement. Residents expressed the most concern about crime and traffic in the City, but also identified dissatisfaction with the availability of affordable housing and shopping opportunities.

Among 41 categories that appear on surveys conducted by other cities, Takoma Park was “above the norm” in 25 categories, “similar to the norm” in 9 categories and “below the norm” in 7 categories. Among the highest ranking items included “Sense of Community”, with a 94% percentile ranking and trash collection with an 88% ranking. (Percentile means that the City’s score is higher than 94% of other rated cities).

City Manager Barbara Matthews stated, “On the whole we are very pleased with the results of this first resident survey. It affirms our sense that residents enjoy living in Takoma Park, and it helps us identify some of the future challenges for City staff and the Council.”

BACKGROUND

The City contracted with National Research Center, Inc. to conduct the first survey of City residents. The survey provided residents with the opportunity to provide feedback on the quality of life in Takoma

Park and on City services. Special sections of the survey addressed services provided by the Takoma Park Police Department, communications outreach, and the possible addition of a gymnasium to the Community Center.

According to the 2000 Census, there were 6,893 households in Takoma Park. The 2007 Takoma Park Resident Survey was mailed to 3,000 randomly selected households. About six percent of the surveys were returned because the housing unit was vacant or the postal service was unable to deliver the survey as addressed. Of the 2,835 eligible households who received the survey, 1,057 returned the questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 37 percent. Citizen survey response rates across the nation typically average around 30%. Surveys were mailed in English and Spanish, and assistance in French and Amharic was made available.

Survey results were weighted so that respondent tenure (i.e., renter or owner) and ward were representative of the breakdown of the list of residents provided by the City to National Research Center, Inc. The margin of error is plus or minus three percentage points around any given percentage point, and plus or minus two points around average ratings on a 100-point scale. The complete survey is available for viewing at www.takomaparkmd.gov/survey. National Research Center, who also recently conducted similar surveys for the City of Rockville and Montgomery County, Maryland, will be presenting the results to the City Council on Monday, January 14, 2007 at 7:30 p.m.

See attached addendum with Survey Highlights. The complete survey may be found at www.takomaparkmd.gov/survey

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